

Howard has donated millions to help provide food, shelter, and transportation to the citizens of Ukraine. He has also worked with John Deere, also headquartered in Illinois, to provide storage, transportation, and equipment to farmers to bolster agriculture in Ukraine.

Ukraine is one of the top producers and exporters supplying grain and oilseed to countries across the globe. Howard's work not only helps farmers in Ukraine, but it also helps bolster food security and national security across the globe and here at home in the United States. President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy awarded Howard with the Order of Yaroslav the Wise of the V degree for his significant merits in strengthening interstate cooperation, supporting the state sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and a significant contribution to the popularization of the Ukrainian state in the world.

I admire Howard and his willingness to help others in times of crisis throughout his life, whether it's helping to address food insecurity, human trafficking, global conflicts or projects in our backyard. Howard has always been a generous neighbor and friend helping with projects throughout Macon County. I admire his work and dedication to making the world a better place.

I thank Howard for all his work and friendship.

HONORING RICH MAROVICH ON HIS 21 YEARS OF PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 14, 2022

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today, along with my colleague, Rep. JOHN GARAMENDI, to honor Rich Marovich for his 21 years of service with the Solano County Water Agency. Through his work as streamkeeper of Putah Creek, Mr. Marovich has shown a ceaseless dedication and passion for protecting and preserving our community's natural resources.

Mr. Marovich is originally from Palo Alto, California, and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Plant Science at the University of California, Davis. After college, he worked at the California Department of Pesticide Regulation, where he administered the department's first Endangered Species Program.

After years of drought, the Putah Creek Accord restored the natural flow of the creek; with this restoration, the need for a streamkeeper emerged and Mr. Marovich was a natural choice for the role. Putah Creek's 70-mile-long stream extends from the Cobb Mountains to the Yolo Bypass making it a major fishing and wildlife resource. To maintain the creek and protect its resources, Mr. Marovich was ever diligent as streamkeeper in improving water quality and conserving creek resources. Through his position, he also provided educational resources to the community regarding the creek's importance and collaborated with landowners along the creek on cleanup efforts.

In addition to his work preserving Putah Creek, Mr. Marovich created several environmental projects including the development of plant nurseries, food cultivation efforts, and critical fundraising campaigns for assessment programs related to the creek's condition.

The annual Winters Salmon Festival and the return of Chinook salmon to Putah Creek is a testament to the tireless efforts and unyielding zeal of Mr. Marovich throughout his career. While his service as Putah Creek's streamkeeper will surely be missed, Mr. Marovich's 21 years of service to the conservation of California's water resources has undoubtedly left a legacy that will last for many years to come. We would like to extend our sincere gratitude for Mr. Marovich's dedicated service to the preservation of Putah Creek and wish him and his family my best as he enters retirement.

CONGRATULATING MICHAEL SCHRAGE'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY AT CENTIER BANK

HON. FRANK J. MRVAN

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 14, 2022

Mr. MRVAN. Madam Speaker, it is with great respect and admiration that I take this time to congratulate Mr. Michael Schrage as he celebrates his 50th anniversary at Centier Bank. Under his outstanding leadership, Centier continues to thrive and has been recognized as the largest private, family-owned bank in the state of Indiana.

Michael Schrage, chief executive officer and chairman of the board for Centier Bank, is a truly innovative business leader. Mr. Schrage is the fourth generation of his family to own and operate the bank, which opened its first branch in 1895 as Bank of Whiting. Centier Bank has sustained immense growth throughout the years, and today the organization operates over 60 locations across Indiana.

During Mr. Schrage's tenure, Centier Bank has reached many goals and enjoyed great success, including the development of an award-winning lender division, the creation of a financial literacy program, and a significant investment in the regional economy through the establishment of banking centers in 32 northern Indiana counties. The company was named a top-ranked bank in the state of Indiana by Forbes from 2019 to 2022. Since 2007, Centier Bank has annually been named one of Indiana's best places to work, which is due to Michael's value-based work ethic that fosters a supportive and thoughtful work environment.

In the community, Michael Schrage has also proven himself to be a pillar of the community and a selfless humanitarian. He gives much of his time and efforts to numerous charity organizations including Saint Jude House, the American Red Cross, the YMCA, and the Boy Scouts of America, to name a few. For his dedication to philanthropic endeavors throughout the community of Northwest Indiana and beyond, he is to be highly commended.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in honoring Michael Schrage on his 50 years at Centier Bank. For his lifetime of remarkable leadership and his commitment to helping those in need, Michael Schrage is worthy of our gratitude and admiration.

HONORING VICKI COLBERT

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 14, 2022

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the community efforts of Vicki Colbert.

For decades, Stewpot Community Services has helped people experiencing homelessness by providing shelter, clothes, and food. Recently, a new face behind the scenes has made a big impact on the community, one meal at a time. Vicki Colbert, known as Mama Vicki, wants every single meal she serves at Stewpot to be her best one yet.

"If I don't eat it and it doesn't taste right, it doesn't come out of this kitchen," she said.

Stewpot serves up to 150 hot meals to those in need, plus another 70 for Meals on Wheels. Colbert is the woman behind it all, but she didn't exactly plan to be there. The non-profit group was suddenly without a chef last fall. Colbert, who is a retired education administrator with a culinary background, just happened to be volunteering that week.

"She had already been here as a volunteer, and I heard about her in the kitchen and heard about her food, so I came just to try it out and found that she made the most delicious mac 'n cheese," said Jill Buckley, executive director at Stewpot Community Services.

It was so good, in fact, that Buckley said they asked her to stay for just one week. Nearly a year later, Colbert couldn't imagine being anywhere else.

"If I wake up every day in my right mind and I'm able to walk and talk, I need to do something grateful with that, so I come to Stewpot," Colbert said. "This is not a job for me, this is a ministry."

It may be considered a soup kitchen, but she's serving much more than your average chicken noodle soup. From Southern-fried catfish to homemade hushpuppies, Colbert is making real homecooked meals out of donated food.

"It requires someone in the kitchen, or some people in the kitchen, who can take whatever is donated and make a meal out of it. That's a skill," Buckley said.

"My sisters and brothers told me the same thing," Colbert said. "Give Vicki some sugar and flour (and) she can make a meal."

That familiar magic touch is how she earned the name Mama Vicki. Handwritten letters from some of the Meals on Wheels recipients are proof of her impact. They say how thankful they are to have her.

"I'm glad that I'm here," Colbert said, "I know it had to be a calling that I had to do." I love these people, I really do."

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Vicki Colbert for her outstanding service to her community.

RECOGNIZING THE HONORABLE GUSTAVO ANTONIO GELPÍ, JR.

HON. JENNIFFER GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN

OF PUERTO RICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 14, 2022

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN. Madam Speaker, on May 12, 2021, President Biden nominated

the Hon. Gustavo Antonio Gelpí, Jr. to be a United States Circuit Judge in the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit, to the seat left vacant by the late Judge Juan R. Torruella. On October 18, 2021, Judge Gelpí was confirmed by the Senate and received his judicial commission on October 19, 2021. I was honored to support his nomination.

The U.S. Circuit Court for the First Circuit hears appeals from the U.S. District Courts of Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Puerto Rico, and Rhode Island. A voice for Puerto Rico—a civil law jurisdiction unlike the remaining common law jurisdictions under the Circuit's purview—is necessary for the fair and impartial application of the law. However, although the population of Puerto Rico is more than double that of each of the other districts in the circuit except for Massachusetts, Judge Gelpí is only the second judge of Hispanic origin and only the second judge from Puerto Rico ever to serve in that Court since it was established by Congress in 1891. I am confident that Judge Gelpí will give Puerto Rico the loud and booming voice in that Court that has been silent since Judge Torruella's passing.

Judge Gelpí served in the United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico for 20 years, first as a magistrate judge and then as district judge. During this time, he gained a reputation for being stern and serious, but patient and courteous; for having an even temper and a sense of humor; for having common sense and an understanding of the human condition; for being open to consider new legal theories but always following the law.

As he goes on to take his seat in the First Circuit, I would like to remind him of Justice Sandra O'Connor's admonition to judges: "Be independent, be fair, venture to be wise."

"Be independent". Decide matters that come before you impartially, on the basis of facts, in accordance with the law, and without regards to outside influence, self-interest, prejudice, or favoritism.

"Be fair". Stay true to the rule that all persons are equal before the eyes of the law. Make sure that judicial proceedings are conducted fairly and that the rights of the parties are respected. Remember that the appearance of fairness and impartiality is almost as important as the reality of it.

"Venture to be wise." Be humble and recognize that judges do not have monopoly on wisdom and that they will not get it right every time. Approach each case with an open mind and a willingness to learn. Be restrained in your decisions. Seek counsel from your fellow judges.

I thank Judge Gelpí for his years of exemplary service to the people of Puerto Rico and I am certain that, in this new stage of his career, he will continue to serve the people of Puerto Rico with outstanding merit.

I would also like to acknowledge my friend, Congresswoman NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ, who was an invaluable ally in raising bipartisan support for Judge Gelpí's appointment. Because we worked together for the benefit of Puerto Rico, irrespective of party lines, we were able to secure the nomination and confirmation of the most qualified candidate for the job.

RECOGNIZING WHEATFIELD COMMONS AS THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF TONAWANDAS' NON-PROFIT OF THE YEAR

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 14, 2022

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Madam Speaker, today I would like to honor and recognize Wheatfield Commons, a senior living community providing assisted living and memory care to countless families in Western New York. Since 1958, residents of Erie and Niagara County have been fortunate to receive the family-oriented services of this non-profit.

Wheatfield Commons is nestled in a park-like suburban setting with inviting grounds and courtyards. In warmer weather, residents enjoy taking in the sights from a large covered front porch. Residents are always encouraged to engage with others, and at a place like Wheatfield Commons, there are so many welcoming areas, like the beautifully decorated dining rooms and cozy fireplaces. All of this is a concerted effort to create an accommodating and enriching atmosphere where residents receive the highest quality services and care.

Senior living communities ought to offer our elderly a healthy and dynamic way of living. Undoubtedly, Wheatfield Commons offers a personal approach to delivering support and services while encouraging family members to be actively involved in the care of their loved ones. Without this mission, you can imagine the potential lack of support and interpersonal connections of senior residents and their families. Luckily, Wheatfield Commons delivers for its residents.

Organizations like Wheatfield Commons do not receive an appropriate amount of praise and attention for their critical efforts, so I am pleased that their hard work can be recognized in this way. Our communities are best served when our seniors are receiving proper care and attention.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to recognize the irreplaceable Wheatfield Commons and their devoted staff. I would like to congratulate them on this well-deserved achievement.

RECOGNIZING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HISTORIC SAM SHORTLINE EXCURSION TRAIN

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 14, 2022

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Historic Savannah, Americus, & Montgomery (SAM) Shortline Excursion Train on the 20th anniversary of its first public run on October 26, 2002.

While the current SAM Shortline Excursion Train had its maiden voyage only twenty years ago, its ancestor and namesake, the Savannah, Americus, & Montgomery (SAM) Railroad Company, was founded during the 1880s by Americus attorney and banker, Colonel Samuel Hugh Hawkins. The Americus region saw its first population and construction booms with the arrival of Southwestern Railroad in the early 1850s. Following the American Civil

War, the people of southwest Georgia saw the railroad as a bright new opportunity for economic development and prosperity. But Southwestern and its lessee, the Central Railroad & Banking Company of Georgia, held a monopoly on the railroads and many in Americus began to feel the effects of exorbitant and discriminatory rates, thus contributing to a decline in local trade. When surrounding cities began proposing new rail lines to bypass Americus, Colonel Hawkins led the charge to construct new lines that would pass directly through the city, leading local investors to organize the Americus, Preston & Lumpkin Railroad (AP&L) in 1884 to ensure that Americus would continue to dominate the region's trade and continue to grow into the Twentieth Century. In 1888, Hawkins and his associates decided to extend the AP&L both east and west to create a direct route between Montgomery, Alabama, and Savannah. Later that year, the 265-mile project would be renamed as the Savannah, Americus, Montgomery Railway, known simply as "The SAM."

Before the SAM's mainline was constructed through the city, the lands surrounding Americus in Sumter County were largely undeveloped and sparsely populated. Following the boom in trade and wealth brought by the SAM, several new towns were founded throughout the region, including Richland, Cordele, Vidalia, and Lyons among others. The first new community, however, was created in Sumter County a few miles west of Americus near an older community called the Plains of Dura. Once SAM's main rail line approached the Plains of Dura community, residents of surrounding settlements began moving closer to the railroad and eventually chartered the town of Plains—the renowned home of famous Georgia peanut farmer and our 39th President, Jimmy Carter. Once fully developed, SAM Railway became the lifeblood of the city of Americus and spurred a second construction and population boom that would reshape the city as a powerful economic nexus in the region. During this period, the city saw the founding of several vital local businesses, such as the Americus Guano Company, the Americus Oil Company, the Americus Illuminating and Power Company, the Americus Construction Company, the Americus Grocery Company, as well as the town's crowning achievement—the Windsor Hotel.

Despite its transformational success, SAM was not immune from the economic struggles of the era, and in 1893, amid a financial panic, Colonel Hawkins and his associates were forced to sell their beloved SAM Railway Company to John Skelton of Richmond, Virginia who would reorganize the company as the Georgia and Alabama Railway in 1895. Samuel Hawkins went on to lose nearly \$1 million of his own money in an unsuccessful attempt to keep the railroad under local control. Nevertheless, the railroad he initially founded proved vital to the southwest Georgia community as it provided jobs, trade, freight transportation, as well as an economic engine for the budding towns and cities across southwest Georgia and Alabama.

At the start of the Twenty-first Century, local residents of the southwest Georgia region developed plans to revive the former SAM Railway as a passenger excursion route. By 2002, the excursion founders had recovered and refurbished several state-owned vintage railcars to seat up to eighty people. They rebranded